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Problems Caused by FOIA

- The Khomeini regime requested under FOIA all information held by CIA on the late Shah of Iran. CIA was legally required to search its files to respond.
- Several liaison officers of a Latin American country confided that CIA release of information in response to FOIA requests was a key reason for liaison channels with them becoming unproductive. Confirming this, the Agency received by mistake intelligence information on the East Germans that this service meant to deliver to a local representative of another intelligence service. This represented our first confirmation of this Latin service cooperating with another service and not with ours.
- The existence of a friendly intelligence service file on an individual, never acknowledged by that Government, was revealed through US State Department and FBI releases under FOIA.
- A foreign official told the DCI he had instructed his intelligence service not to pass certain information to US Intelligence because of apprehensions about various US laws, including the FOIA.
- Widespread media coverage in one Latin country of documents released through the FOIA led to assets complaining about the unnecessary risks now involved in providing information. One broke contact after reading the name of his case officer on the front page of a major daily newspaper. Another source, with an outstanding production record, stopped providing information on the internal political scene and then later asked to terminate his relationship with the CIA altogether.
- A left-wing bookshop in a friendly country imported declassified CIA documents released under FOIA on behalf of the People's Republic of China.
- A foreign intelligence source from a denied area, having broken off a productive association specifically because of fear of the consequences of disclosure under the FOIA, failed to use established means for reviving contact with the Agency despite his renewed residence outside his native country.

- A principal station in Asia advised that a number of prospective agent candidates have flatly refused to sign secrecy agreements upon recruitment because of fear of exposure in the media in the US or other countries.
- An asset who had agreed to make an operational introduction failed to appear at a prearranged meeting, later explaining that association with the covert side of CIA is now simply too dangerous.
- Officials of an important foreign security service stated they considered CIA incapable of keeping secrets. Consequently, information of their country's actions in troubled areas has specifically been denied to CIA.
- A European journalist who had a promising career and had promised to assist CIA as a source changed his mind, saying that what he had read in the world press convinced him of CIA's inability to protect its sources and specifically journalists.
- An academician who had unique contact for CIA purposes with a foreign diplomatic official broke off association with CIA, asserting that he could not risk jeopardizing his career through disclosures.
- An African security service will not pass information to CIA in writing because of the general impression, based on published disclosures from FOIA and aspects of the American system, that "we cannot keep secrets."
- A key Middle East source was lost because of his fears that through US revelations his identity as a CIA source would become known.